

INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

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HABERD, DR. EFE, WELLBORN, RUEGGER, BORSINGER

KINCHER, DR. GORDON, AND DR. RUEGGER

FROM: NEW YORK

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 1669, NOVEMBER 7, 8 PM

DECLASSIFIED

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By JK, NARS, Date 8/11/77

PRIORITY

EYES ONLY FOR SECRETARY - PASS WHITE HOUSE

ICRC NEGOTIATIONS

YOST AND WELLBORN MET WITH FORMER ICRC PRESIDENT PAUL RUEGGER AND MELCHIOR BORSINGER, SEC OF ICRC EXEC BOARD AT 10:00 A.M. TODAY. DISCUSS ICRC REACTION TO INSPECTION CARGOES INCOMING VESSELS TO CUBA. PRESENT FROM UN WERE LOUTFI, RIKHYE AND STAVROPOULOS.

RUEGGER OPENED DISCUSSIONS WITH EXPRESSION OF WILLINGNESS ON PART ICRC TO "LEND GOOD OFFICES" IN ATTEMPT TO ALLEVIATE TENSE SITUATION IN CARIBBEAN. HE STRESSED HOWEVER SUCH ACTION WAS PRECEDENT ON PART OF ICRC AS ORGANIZATION HAD FORMERLY LIMITED ACTIVITIES TO COPING WITH PROBLEMS IN HUMANITARIAN FIELD. HE TERMED IT "PROTECTION OF MAN". NEVERTHELESS, RUEGGER FELT ICRC RESOLUTIONS ALREADY PASSED UNDER BROAD HEADING "WORK FOR PEACE" ENABLED ORGANIZATION TO PURSUE THIS ACTIVITY IN EVENT CERTAIN CONDITIONS MET.

HIS FIRST POINT CONCERNED ABSOLUTE NECESSITY THAT ICRC HAVE CONCURRENCE THREE PARTIES INVOLVED IN PRESENT DISPUTE. RUEGGER RECOGNIZED THAT SOVIETS AND US WERE IN GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT ICRC COULD PLAY USEFUL ROLE IN PRESENT CRISIS. HE SAID STUMBLING BLOCK RELATED CUBAN CONCURRENCE TO PROGRAM. RUEGGER DID NOT PARTICULARLY CARE HOW GIVEN, COULD BE "SIMPLE NOTIFICATIONS" OR "IN FORM OF DECLARATION". ICRC COMPLETELY FLEXIBLE THIS POINT.

RUEGGER

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RUEGGER THEN BROUGHT UP OTHER QUESTIONS FIRST OF WHICH INVOLVED PROBLEM OF AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH ICRC SHOULD OPERATE. HE DID FEEL HIS ORGANIZATION SHOULD HAVE PRIME RESPONSIBILITY FOR RAPID SELECTION OF TRUSTWORTHY AND COMPETENT STAFF AND INDICATED MEMBERS OF SWISS MILITIA WERE UNDER CONSIDERATION. RUEGGER MENTIONED SEVERAL OTHER QUESTIONS WHICH MUST BE SETTLED BEFORE FINAL SANCTION GIVEN BY ICRC TO UNDERTAKE THIS TASK. HE STATED INSTRUCTIONS FOR INSPECTION CORPS SHOULD BE DRAWN UP BY UN AND TRANSMITTED TO GENEVA FOR ICRC APPROVAL AS IN ACCORD RED CROSS POLICY. HE SAID ICRC DID NOT WANT TO BECOME INVOLVED IN CHECKING FOR SUCH ARMS AS HAND GRENADES BUT DESIRED TO LIMIT INSPECTION TO "EASILY IDENTIFIED ENGINES OF WAR". YOST REPLIED US INTERESTED IN THOSE ARMS LISTED IN PRESIDENT'S PROCLAMATION AS OFFENSIVE. RUEGGER MENTIONED UNCERTAINTIES ON INSPECTING OTHER THAN SOVIET BLOC SHIPS, FOR EXAMPLE, THOSE CARRIERS CHARTERED BY SOVIET OR BLOC NATIONS FLYING PANAMANIAN, LIBERIAN OR OTHER FLAGS. HE ALSO STRESSED POINT ICRC INSPECTORS COULD NOT RESORT TO FORCE DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY. IN EVENT NON-COMPLIANCE WITH INSPECTION PROCEDURE, ICRC WOULD MERELY REPORT THIS TO UN. RUEGGER ALSO REFERRED TO UNSETTLED MATTER OF WHETHER RED CROSS EMBLEMS COULD BE WORN AND FLAGS FLOWN.

YOST THEN OUTLINED SITUATION AS SEEN THROUGH EYES US. COMMENCING WITH KENNEDY-KHRUSHCHEV AGREEMENT THROUGH EXCHANGE OF LETTERS AND CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH US QUARANTINE WOULD BE LIFTED. HE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION ICRC FOR WILLINGNESS TO ASSIST THIS DELICATE OPERATION AND HOPED HIS TALKS WITH SOVIETS AND CUBANS SCHEDULED FOR LATER IN DAY WOULD BE FRUITFUL.

RUEGGER AGAIN DREW GROUP'S ATTENTION TO ABSOLUTE NECESSITY CUBAN AGREEMENT BEFORE ICRC UNDERTOOK INSPECTION TASK. HE SAID FORTUNATELY HIS ORGANIZATION DID RENDER ASSISTANCE TO CASTRO AT TIME CUBAN PREMIER HIDING IN SIERRA MAESTRA. RUEGGER ALSO SAID ICRC HAD MORE RECENT REQUEST FROM CASTRO HIMSELF TO HELP WITH HUMANITARIAN PROBLEMS ON ISLAND.

LOUTFI AND STAVROPOULOS THEN SUGGESTED US MIGHT CONSIDER NOTIFYING WORLD THAT ICRC INSPECTION SYSTEM IN EFFECT.

YOST

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YOST FELT THIS NOTIFICATION MORE APPROPRIATELY A TASK OF UN. RIKHYE THEN STRESSED POINT THAT SOVIETS HAVE AGREED TO ICRC ALONE UNDERTAKING THIS TASK AND ANY FINAL AGREEMENT MUST UNDERPLAY ROLE UN THESE PROCEEDINGS.

YOST INDICATED TO GROUP THAT SOVIETS HAD INFORMED US THEY HAVE NO OBJECTION TO SWEDISH VESSELS BEING CHARTERED FOR INSPECTION SERVICE, HOWEVER STRESSED TIME IS OF ESSENCE. WELLBORN THEN PROVIDED UN WITH LIST OF SWEDISH VESSELS IN AREA POSSIBLY AVAILABLE FOR CHARTER BY ICRC. MEETING BROKE UP AT 11 A.M. AS MOROZOV AND AIDES WERE WAITING FOR TALKS WITH RUEGGER AND UN. CUBANS WERE SCHEDULED FOR 3:00 MEETING.

SUBSEQUENTLY U THANT AND LOUTFI, AT MTG WITH STEVENSON, MCCLOY AND YOST, REPORTED THAT, WHILE SOVS WERE RAISING NO OBJECTION TO PROPOSED RED CROSS PROCEDURES, THEY CONTINUING TO INSIST THAT ICRC SYSTEM SHOULD LAST ONLY UNTIL EVACUATION "OFFENSIVE WEAPONS", I.E. MISSILES, FROM CUBA HAS BEEN COMPLETED WHICH THEY ESTIMATE TO BE ABOUT NOV 10. NATURALLY RED CROSS OFFICIALS ARE UNWILLING TO SET UP ELABORATE SYSTEM IF IT WOULD ONLY BE IN EFFECT FOR FEW DAYS. WE REITERATED TO SYG AND LOUTFI OUR VIEW THAT ICRC SYSTEM SHOULD CONTINUE UNTIL US QUARANTINE IS LIFTED, THAT IS, UNTIL EVACUATION OF WEAPONS AND VERIFICATION HAVE BEEN COMPLETED AND ASSURANCES ABOUT NON-REINTRODUCTION RECEIVED. WE EXPECT TO SEE MOROZOV TOMORROW TO EMPHASIZE THIS POINT ONCE AGAIN, MAKING CLEAR THAT, IF ICRC IS NOT ESTABLISHED, THERE WOULD BE NO SUSPENSION OF OUR QUARANTINE.

SYG AND LOUTFI ALSO REPORTED THAT THEY AND ICRC OFFICIALS HAD FORMALLY ASKED FOR CUBAN "CONSENT" TO ESTABLISHMENT ICRC SYSTEM AND CUBAN AMB HAD SAID HE WOULD SEEK TO OBTAIN HIS GOVT'S REPLY BY TOMORROW. HE PERSONALLY SEEMED TO THINK THAT CONSENT WOULD BE FORTHCOMING.

STEVENSON

DMJ

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NOTE: Advance copies to 88 11-7-62 CWO-M